

Baird Announces Critical Funding for Southwest Washington Projects (December 18, 2007)

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Brian Baird (WA-03) today announced major funding for key Southwest Washington projects that was secured last night when the Omnibus Appropriations Bill passed the House of Representatives. Included in the bill is funding for state-run programs to conduct agricultural research, complete methamphetamine studies, and millions of dollars to improve Southwest Washington's infrastructure and conserve public lands. The bill will now be sent to the Senate for consideration.

"The federal funding is essential to all Americans – especially those in Southwest Washington who depend on these critical resources day in and day out," said Congressman Brian Baird. "By improving our local infrastructure, preserving our public lands, and expanding agricultural research, we are investing in the growth and future of our economy."

Congressman Baird announced the following funding for key Southwest Washington projects:

\$563,031 in funding from the USDA-CSREES to expand Washington State University's Aquaculture Research Initiative.

Expansion of aquaculture in the Pacific Northwest has often been limited by the threat of domestic and foreign pathogens, which can close both domestic and foreign markets by competition from foreign imports, and by lack of innovation in husbandry technology, utilization of limited water resources, and encroachment of invasive species such as burrowing shrimp into areas traditionally occupied by aquaculture operations. This funding will allow researchers to begin to address the unique needs of the Washington State shellfish industry. The Aquaculture Research Initiative complements the ongoing shellfish research at the Hatfield Science Center.

\$500,472 in funding for the Center for International Trade in Forest Products (CINTRAFOR) at the University of Washington.

CINTRAFOR's objective is to improve the international competitiveness of the U.S. forest products industry and provide research and information support to forest products exporters to help them respond more effectively to international trade opportunities. The Center organizes outreach activities and research to improve knowledge of trade problems, opportunities, issues, and policies. This funding will help CINTRAFOR achieve this goal.

\$326,697 for the Northwest Center for Small Fruits Research.

The Center is a cooperative venture between researchers and berry and grape producers in the Pacific Northwest. Past research through the Center has focused on integrated pest management to reduce chemical outputs and augmentation of genetic resources available to small fruits farmers. Emerging issues of concern to the Center include food safety and human nutrition, as well as the role of small fruit growing and processing in rural community economic development.

The research conducted by the Long Beach unit is critical to the survival of the cranberry industry in the Pacific Northwest. Only through innovative technologies, produced in part by the Long Beach facility, has the cranberry industry in the Northwest survived an influx of under-priced imports. This funding will allow the Northwest cranberry industry to remain competitive in the international marketplace.

½ \$1,869,819 in funding for the construction of the Agriculture Research Service Facility in Pullman, Washington.

This funding will help build a state-of-the-art research facility for ARS scientists in Pullman, Washington. There is currently not enough laboratory space at the facility for the existing ARS scientists and no room for the growth of new scientific efforts. The new ARS facility will be fully integrated in the Washington State University's six building Life Sciences/Biotechnology complex.

½ \$517,000 in funding to Washington State University Methamphetamine Research from the Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services account.

The funding will be used to hire two additional world-class faculty and associated research staff to support and complement the substance abuse research at WSU in Spokane. While the basic research program is well-established in Pullman, the applied program focusing on prevention and intervention studies rests primarily on the shoulders of one researcher in Spokane. The additional faculty and research personnel will provide the opportunity to develop the critical mass needed to grow and sustain the program.

½ \$ \$1,804,800 in funding for the Washington State Methamphetamine Initiative.

The funding will be utilized to reach additional meth-affected regions in the state by training and equipping additional law enforcement personnel to increase regional response capabilities and perform proactive investigations statewide. It will also allow for an expanded implementation of the meth strategy to additional counties and tribal jurisdictions.

½ \$598,000 in funding for the Columbia River at Baker Bay, Washington (Port of Ilwaco).

The funding will be utilized for maintenance dredging of the three-mile entrance channel through Baker Bay to the Port of Ilwaco Harbor. Maintenance dredging is essential to the Port of Ilwaco, with regard to both navigation safety of the channel and economic development in the region. The Port serves vessels from the entire Pacific Rim including Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, Hawaii, and Canada.

½ \$9,246,648 in funding for the Mt. St. Helens Sediment Control, Washington.

In response to the eruption of Mount St. Helens that dramatically altered the hydraulic and hydrologic regimes of the Cowlitz and Toutle River Valley, the funding will be used to institute sediment control measures to maintain flood protection. The funding will be used to continue sediment monitoring and gradation analysis; continue analysis of potential follow-up on long-term alternatives for system-wide flood and navigation protection; initiate and complete incremental dredging; and evaluate long-term fish passage alternatives at the sediment retention structure.

½ \$2,952,000 in funding for the Puget Sound and Adjacent Waters Restoration in Washington.

This funding will be used to restore habitat in the Puget Sound Basin of Washington State. Four potential projects would restore 1800 acres of estuarine and 26 river miles of watershed habitats. The restoration would provide diverse habitats for several ESA listed species, including Chinook salmon, Hood Canal summer chum, bull trout, and Orca whales. Once consultation is complete, the Corps of Engineers plan to begin preparing decision documents for these priority projects, or other identified during the process, for potential construction in Fiscal Year 2007 and Fiscal Year 2008.

Two locally designed states in the Nisqually River estuary would provide nearly 800 acres of restoration. One site is on a federally owned National Wildlife Refuge and the other is owned by the Nisqually Tribe. Both projects are high priorities for the EPA, USF & W, NOAA, South Sound Salmon Enhancement Group, Nisqually Tribe, and the State of Washington.

½ \$229,000 in funding for the Columbia River between Chinook and Sand Island
(Port of Chinook), Washington.

Senator Patty Murray (D-WA.) secured this funding in the Senate version of the Fiscal Year 2007 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, which will be used for maintenance dredging of the one-mile channel from the Columbia River mile marker 5 to the Port of Chinook boat basin. This maintenance dredging must occur to allow for commercial and recreational boats to leave and return.

½ \$836,740 in funding for the Fort Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

The funding, which was initially included in Senate version of the Fiscal Year 2007 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill by Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray, will be used to remodel the Visitor Center for the Historic Reserve. In order to meet the needs of the increasing number of visitors to the Reserve, more than 800,000 in 2006, the funding will be used to create exhibit space, as well as an auditorium and sales and support space. The proposed renovation would increase the visitor capacity at the Center by 50%.

½ \$492,200 in funding for the Water Treatment Facility in Longview, Washington.

Congressman Baird worked with Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) to ensure funding for the creation of a new Water Treatment Facility and tap into a groundwater well in the southwesterly part of the city. A test well indicated that the groundwater is easily treated to potable standards, and that the volume of water available from the aquifer is sufficient to meet the city's needs for many years. A new Water Treatment Facility would eliminate any impact from Mt. St. Helens sedimentation of the Cowlitz River and ensure a stable water supply.

½ \$984,400 in funding for land acquisition in the Columbia River Gorge in Oregon and Washington.

The funding will help the Forest Service purchase remaining properties, as regulated under the National Scenic Area Act, including land in the Columbia River Gorge in Washington and Oregon. Since 2001, over 4000 acres of ½ high-priority ½ private land worth an estimated \$35 million have been offered for sale to the Forest Service, yet Congress has only appropriated \$14.5 million to date. The Forest Service signed options to before the March 2004 deadline to purchase some of the most sensitive lands that had not been purchased because of continuous funding shortfalls. The requested funding would purchase the remaining properties with signed options.

½ \$526,636 in Funding for the Ocean Beach Hospital in Ilwaco, Washington for the Western Washington Rural Health Care Collaborative Telepharmacy Program.

The funding will be used for the Western Washington Rural Health Care Collaborative (WWRHCC) to implement a telepharmacy program utilized by eight Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) in rural areas of Southwest Washington. The proposed telepharmacy program will utilize Cardinal Health's ½ Pyxis Connect ½ technology to allow registered pharmacy technicians working in stores in remote or rural locations to deliver medications to customers after the prescription has been processed and adjudicated by a pharmacist working from a home or central pharmacy location. This project includes providing equipment; Pxyis automated systems software and training to rural hospitals.

½ Combined funding of \$277,073 for the Thurston-Mason County Medical Society Volunteer Care Institute in Olympia, Washington.

The funding will be used to administer a demonstration project to provide care to non-English speaking patients, including assistance with enrollment fees, case management, treatment and transition at Thurston-Mason County

Medical Society Volunteer Care Institute. The funding request will assist with the enrollment, case management, treatment, and transition costs associated with non-English speaking patients which account for approximately 20 percent of the Volunteer Care Institute's total patient population. Local partners have already contributed or pledged approximately \$900,000 towards this project.

Congressman Adam Smith was successful in securing \$191,593 in funding for a project and Congressman Brian Baird and Senator Maria Cantwell were successful in securing 85,480 in funding as passed in the Omnibus appropriations bill.

and \$238,754 in funding for Community Home Health & Hospice, Longview, WA and Home Health Tele-monitoring System.

Funding would be used by Community Home Health & Hospice, a nonprofit agency, to purchase 50 monitors to implement a telemonitoring program in which monitors would be placed in the patient's home and prompt them to take their vital signs on at least a daily basis. The data would be immediately transmitted to the agency to be monitored by a specially trained registered nurse.

Community Home Health & Hospice has been providing home health care services to residents of Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, and Clark counties since 1977. It provides skilled home healthy care, in-home hospice, and home care personal services.

and \$343,000 in funding for the Intercity Transit Multimodal Facility in Olympia, Washington.

The funding will be used to construct a multimodal facility in downtown Olympia adjacent to the Olympia Transit Center. The facility will allow intercity bus providers to relocate to the facility to improve citizen access between local transit and intercity buses. Currently, the local transit and intercity bus facilities are in different parts of town, making it difficult to transfer between the two modes.

and \$147,000 in funding for the Washington Technology Center in Vancouver, Washington.

The Washington Technology Center, a statewide public economic development agency focused on technology and innovation, is seeking to develop a semiconductor and micro device user facility in Vancouver, Washington. This facility will be modeled after Washington Technology Center's successful microfabrication laboratory in Seattle (located on the University of Washington campus), but tailored to meet the needs of the semiconductor and solar energy industries in Clark County, Washington. The facility will be located on the Washington State University-Vancouver campus.

Phase I of the project will include planning and constructing a small clean room in a currently existing space near the WSU-Vancouver campus and purchasing equipment to develop a foundation of standard semiconductor and micro-

device fabrication processes at the lab.

½ \$196,000 in funding for the replacement of the Ferry in Wahkiakum County, Washington.

The ferry Wahkiakum has been in service for nearly 50 years and this funding will replace the aging vessel so that the lower Columbia transportation link can be maintained. The ferry plays a vital role in the economic lifeline for the lower Columbia communities. There are no other opportunities for crossing the Columbia River in this region without going a significant distance, either west to the Megler-Astoria Bridge, or east to the Longview-Rainier Oregon bridge. The ferry has become increasingly popular in recent years with tourists and bicyclists. In addition, the establishment of the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park is drawing more visitors and new residents to the area.

½ \$367,500 in funding for the Discovery Trail that runs from Long Beach to Port of Ilwaco, Washington.

The funding will be used to permit the completion of the construction of the Discovery Trail, Phase I, between Seaview and Ilwaco. Planning, design, engineering, and right of way activities have been completed. The Discovery Trail is a 35-mile linear trail that will ultimately connect units of the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park, including Cape Disappointment, Ft. Columbia, Station Camp and Dismal Nitch.

½ \$1,372,000 in funding for West Vancouver Freight Access.

The West Vancouver Freight Access Project combines Port freight rail improvements with surface road improvements near the Vancouver Columbia River waterfront. The project addresses necessary new freight rail access to and from the rail mainline and the Port, while at the same time providing considerable capacity and velocity improvement to a national system chokepoint at the Vancouver Rail Wye.

Additional partners in the project include Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, Union Pacific Railroad, Washington Department of Transportation, Gramor Development Incorporated, Boise Cascade Corporation and current Port tenants and customers.

The project is critical to the future economic growth of the Southwest Washington region. The Port of Vancouver is an economic engine bringing \$1.6 billion in regional economic benefits, supporting 15,580 jobs, \$763.6 million in personal income, and \$81.8 million in state and local taxes to the region and state. The rail project will allow the Port of Vancouver and the region to support existing and planned freight volumes.

½ \$686,000 in funding for the I-5 / I-205 Salmon Creek Interchange Project in Clark County, Washington.

The existing Salmon Creek Interchange area (Interstate 5 and Interstate 205 on NE 134th Street) suffers from intense traffic congestion and a high incidence rate of crashes due to the close proximity of signals and high traffic volumes of 150,000 vehicles per day. The roads in the interchange area are rated as providing an unacceptable level of service, which is the worst rating of traffic congestion possible in Clark County.

Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray were successful in securing funding that will be used for projects to improve and complete a new I-5/ I-205 interchange. Major project components include: constructing a new road segment; intersection improvements; road widening; adding bike lanes and sidewalks; installing raised medians and dual turning lanes; installing, modifying, and removing traffic signals; and addressing environmental mitigation issues.

½ \$14,760,000 in funding for Columbia River Channel Improvements in Oregon & Washington.

The funding will be used to deepen the 103 mile federal navigation channel from the Mouth of the Columbia River to Vancouver by three feet (from 40 to 43 feet). Using funding from both Oregon and Washington states and federally appropriated funds, the Army Corps of Engineers has been working on deepening the Columbia River navigation channel since June of 2005. There are approximately 52 miles of Lower Columbia River Channel that still need to be deepened.

This project is supported by over 250 business, labor, and agricultural, port and maritime organizations throughout the Northwest.

½ Congressman Brian Baird was also pleased to see 98,000 in funding for the Centralia Flood Control Project included in the bill. Senator Patty Murray worked to ensure that funding was included to construct a flood control project that would find a solution to the flooding in the Chehalis River Basin. Senator Murray was successful in getting funding included in the Water Resources Development Act earlier this year.

½ Legislation introduced in the House by Congressman Baird and in the Senate by Patty Murray to add Vancouver to the list of locations where court in the Western District of Washington can be held was also included in the Omnibus appropriations bill. Currently, court can only be held in Seattle, Tacoma, and Bellingham.

Congressman Baird Votes ½Present" on Omnibus Bill:

While Congressman Baird supported passing funding for key Southwest Washington projects, his vote of *present* on the Omnibus Appropriations bill is congruent with his position that bills and conference reports must be available to members of Congress and the general public for sufficient time before it goes to the House floor for a vote. Congressman Baird voiced concern that the Omnibus appropriations bill was posted late Sunday night, leaving Congressional staff and members little time to review the entire bill.

Last night, I voted *present* to reflect my strong belief that members of Congress and the public be given adequate time to review and reflect upon any bill that comes on the House floor, said Congressman Baird. When Congress is asked to approve more than \$500 billion in taxpayer dollars, it is essential that we have our facts straight and that the public has the opportunity to review the legislation accordingly. We must have an open process to ensure that we are being responsible in the way we do business to allow ourselves to make the best decisions possible for all Americans.

Earlier this year, Congressman Brian Baird re-introduced legislation with Congressman Walter Jones (R-NC), to ensure that members have adequate time to review and read legislation before being brought up for a vote. H.Res.504 or the *72 Hour Bill*, would require that all bills and conference reports be made available to members of Congress and the general public for 72 hours online before it can be brought to the House floor for a vote; repeals the *last six days* provision in current House Rules, which provides that the opportunity to read conference reports is automatically waived in the last six days of a congressional session; and, protects the exceptions to the current *three day rule*, including declarations of war or national emergencies.

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